



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
P.O. BOX 2360  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

**Date:** 02/26/2015  
**Time:** 11:00 AM  
**Location:** 308  
**Committee:** House Finance

**Department:** Education

**Person Testifying:** Kathryn S. Matayoshi, Superintendent of Education

**Title of Bill:** HB 0820, HD1 RELATING TO PUBLIC EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.

**Purpose of Bill:** Establishes the Executive Office on Early Learning Prekindergarten Program to be administered by the Executive Office on Early Learning and provided through Department of Education public schools and public charter schools. (HB820 HD1)

**Department's Position:**

The Department of Education recognizes the importance of early childhood education, as well as its impact upon our children's future outcomes and the state's economic growth. We offer the following comments.

Our mission is to ensure Hawaii's public school students receive a quality education. As such, the Department is tasked with providing education for students in grades K-12 and its expertise and priorities lies therein. Furthermore, our current infrastructure with regards to early childhood recruitment, certification, capacity-building and resources to lead and support early learning is limited and underdeveloped.

The Department recognizes the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) as possessing the early childhood expertise, including but not limited to comprehensive early childhood development and learning. Therefore, any early childhood programs should be under the management and operational oversight of the EOEL.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 23, 2015

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair  
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Rachael Wong, DrPH, Director

SUBJECT: **H.B. 820 H.D. 1 – RELATING TO PUBLIC EARLY CHILDHOOD  
EDUCATION**

Hearing: Thursday, February 26, 2015; 11:00 a.m.  
Conference Room 308, State Capitol

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of H.B. 820 H.D. 1 is to establish the Executive Office on Early Learning Pre-kindergarten Program to be administered by the Executive Office on Early Learning and provided through the Department of Education public schools and public charter schools.

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of the bill provided that its passage cannot replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Budget. The DHS defers to the Department of Education (DOE), the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL), and the Hawaii State Public Charter School Commission on operational and implementation issues. The DHS offers the following comments.

**Child Care Licensing:** For working families who need child care before or after the DOE prekindergarten (EOEL PreK) program begins and ends, the child care program may need to be licensed by the DHS if the DOE does not directly operate the child care program.

**Preschool Open Doors:** Act 169, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013, established the existing child care assistance program, Preschool Open Doors (POD), as the statewide school readiness program and is administered by the DHS. Act 169 is codified as section 346-181, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS). The POD program currently serves low to moderate income families whose children will be eligible for kindergarten in the following school year.

The DHS expanded the POD program this State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2015 to cover almost 1,300 children. The total budget for SFY 2015 is \$7.6 million (with \$1.6 million in the DHS' base budget, HMS-305). The POD expansion funds in the amount of \$6,000,000 were provided for SFY 2015 only to serve up to additional 1,050 eligible children. Until SFY 2014, the POD program served 315-320 children utilizing \$1.6 million in the base budget. Families, whose children are enrolled in classrooms on DOE public school campuses or at a public charter school, are not eligible for POD program services.

**EOEL PreK:** The DHS comments that if the intent of the bill is to eventually serve ALL 4 year olds who will be entering Kindergarten in the following year, then the POD program may no longer be needed for the 4 year olds, and DHS recommends amending section 346-181, HRS. However, if this is the case, DHS foresees a transition period where POD and EOEL PreK co-exist as DOE implements the EOEL PreK program.

If the EOEL PreK program cannot serve ALL 4 year olds, then POD could continue, and DOE would need to work with DHS to identify those communities with few private preschools in order to increase the number of 4 year olds who have access to some kind of PreK or school readiness program.

We raise this concern because the measure proposes that the EOEL PreK program is voluntary. As proposed, parents retain the choice to not enroll their children in the proposed EOEL PreK program and, instead, may choose to enroll their children in the POD program, or seek Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) funding (child care subsidies) to send their children to private child care programs.



**S E A C**  
**Special Education Advisory Council**

919 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 101

Honolulu, HI 96814

Phone: 586-8126 Fax: 586-8129

email: [spin@doh.hawaii.gov](mailto:spin@doh.hawaii.gov)

February 26, 2015

**Special Education  
Advisory Council**

Ms. Ivalee Sinclair, *Chair*  
Ms. Martha Guinan, *Vice  
Chair*

Ms. Brendelyn Ancheta  
Dr. Tammy Bopp  
Dr. Robert Campbell  
Ms. Deborah Cheeseman  
Ms. Annette Cooper  
Ms. Shari Dela Cuadra-Larsen,  
*liaison to the Superintendent*  
Ms. Gabriele Finn  
Ms. Jenny Gong  
Ms. Natalie Haggerty  
Ms. Barbara Ioli  
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Ms. Deborah Kobayakawa  
Ms. Bernadette Lane  
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Ms. Stacey Oshio  
Ms. Zaidarene Place  
Ms. Barbara Pretty  
Ms. Kau'i Rezendes  
Ms. Rosie Rowe  
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Ms. Susan Wood

Amanda Kaahanui, Staff  
Susan Rocco, Staff

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Chair, Committee on Finance  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: HB 820 HD1 - Relating to Public Early Childhood Education

Dear Chair Luke and Members of the Committee,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), Hawaii's State Advisory Panel under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), **strongly supports** the intent of HB 820, HD 1 that establishes the Executive Office on Early Learning Prekindergarten Program to be administered by the Executive Office on Early Learning and provided through public schools, including charter schools.

SEAC concurs with the program focus on four year olds, and in particular, underserved and at-risk children, who may lag behind their peers without quality early learning supports. Quality intervention at an early age can reduce the need for more intensive interventions, including special education and related services, in subsequent years.

SEAC also believes that increasing the availability of early learning programs that meet the high quality standards set by the Office of Early Learning Prekindergarten Program will create more opportunities for young children with disabilities to have their school readiness needs met in inclusive settings.

We recommend for your consideration a change in the term *family engagement* to *family partnership* and the inclusion of a definition of *family partnership*. The Executive Office on Early Learning created the **Hawaii Family Partnership Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings** in 2013 to promote high standards and shared expectations for families and staff of early childhood programs. The Guidelines are also intended to align with the Family-School Partnership Standards being proposed for implementation by the Department of Education.



These Family Partnership Guidelines can be found at <http://earlylearning.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Family-Partnership-Guidelines.pdf>.

Specifically, we recommend that you consider the following changes:

- 1) Substitute the term *family partnership* for the term *family engagement* on page 20, line 10, (3).
- 2) Substitute the definition of *family partnership* as follows for the definition of *family engagement* found on page 22, lines 7-12: “‘Family partnership’ means practices that follow the key principles of welcoming all families, communicating effectively, supporting success, speaking up for every child, sharing decision-making and partnering with the community.”

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully,

Ivalee Sinclair, Chair



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**HAWAII TEACHER STANDARDS BOARD**  
650 IWILEI ROAD, SUITE 201  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE**  
**COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

PERSON TESTIFYING: Lynn Hammonds, Executive Director

DATE: Thursday, February 26, 2015

TIME: 11:00 AM

LOCATION: State Capitol Conference Room 308

TITLE OF BILL: HB820 HD1 RELATING TO PUBLIC EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

PURPOSE OF BILL: Establishes the Executive Office on Early Learning Prekindergarten Program to be administered by the Executive Office on Early Learning and provided through Department of Education public schools and public charter schools. (HB820 HD1)

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Teacher Standards Board (HTSB) supports HB820 HD1 to establish a pre-kindergarten program in partnership with the department of education and encourages the inclusion of charter schools so that children in all Hawaii public schools may be served.

The HTSB believes that early childhood classrooms should be staffed by professionally trained, early childhood licensed teachers and encourages the Executive Office on Early Learning and Hawaii Educator Preparation Programs to work together to provide adequate numbers of trained teachers for all early childhood classrooms in Hawaii public schools.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



DAVID IGE  
GOVERNOR



CATHERINE PAYNE  
CHAIRPERSON

STATE OF HAWAII  
**STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION**  
**(‘AHA KULA HO‘ĀMANA)**

<http://CharterCommission.Hawaii.Gov>  
1111 Bishop Street, Suite 516, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Tel: 586-3775 Fax: 586-3776

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FOR:	HB 820 HD1 Relating to Public Early Childhood Education
DATE:	Thursday, February 26, 2015
TIME:	11:00 a.m.
COMMITTEE(S):	House Committee on Finance
ROOM:	Conference Room 308
FROM:	Tom Hutton, Executive Director State Public Charter School Commission

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Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and members of the Committee:

The State Public Charter School Commission (“Commission”) appreciates the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of the intent of House Bill 820 HD1, “Relating to Public Early Childhood Education,” which would establish an early learning prekindergarten program to be provided through the Department of Education schools and charter schools.

The Commission recently was awarded a \$14.8 million federal grant from the Preschool Development Grants Program to support the creation of high-quality pre-kindergarten classrooms at 18 charter schools across the state over the next four years. This grant focuses on providing pre-kindergarten to underserved communities with large high-needs populations. Over the years of implementing the grant, the Commission plans to work with the schools, private funders, the Legislature, and other stakeholders on program sustainability beyond the life of the grant. HB 820 offers one potential path to program sustainability.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



Thursday, February 26, 2015

Relating to House Bill 820 House Draft 1  
Testifying in Strong Support

Aloha, Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Nishimoto and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

The Democratic Party of Hawaii **strongly supports HB820 HD1 Relating to Public Early Childhood Education**, which establishes the Executive Office on Early Learning Prekindergarten Program to be administered by the Executive Office on Early Learning and provided through Department of Education public schools and public charter schools.

This bill is important because it helps lay the foundation for a universal preschool program, which will provide our keiki with a solid foundation for a lifetime of learning. Studies have proven that early childhood programs, like the one proposed in this bill, have immediate and long-term benefits for the children who participate in them, as well as our whole society.

We support the House Draft 1, which clarifies that the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) should administer the program. EOEL can work with the Department of Education and the State Public Charter School Commission, drawing on the strengths of both systems to develop a high-quality prekindergarten program. This bill is important also because of its focus on underserved and at-risk children. High-quality education, perhaps more than any other social program, is critical to help break cycles of poverty that exist in our community.

For all these reasons, we support HB820 HD1 and urge your support for its passage.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Stephanie Ohigashi  
Chairperson, Democratic Party of Hawai'i

And The Legislation Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawaii





**Testimony to the House Committee on Finance  
Thursday, February 26, 2015 at 11:00 A.M.  
Conference Room 308, State Capitol**

**RE: HOUSE BILL 820 HD1 RELATING TO PUBLIC EARLY CHILDHOOD  
EDUCATION**

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports** HB 820 HD1, which establishes the Executive Office on Early Learning Prekindergarten Program to be administered by the Executive Office on Early Learning and provided through Department of Education public schools and public charter schools.

The Chamber is the largest business organization in Hawaii, representing about 1,000 businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

The establishment of the Executive Office on Early Learning Prekindergarten Program to be administered by the Executive Office on Early Learning is another necessary and positive step in establishing a foundation for early learning programs in our state.

The Chamber believes that this measure must be in place to provide services to children before they enter kindergarten. Providing family child interaction learning programs as part of a mixed delivery early learning system is critical in ensuring school readiness of Hawaii's children prior to entering kindergarten.

Also, the Chamber strongly believes that focusing on early childhood is critical because brain development takes place by age five. We believe it is imperative to begin investing early in a child's life, when the brain is in this state of tremendous growth potential. In 2008, the Hawaii Economic Benefits Study of early education for Hawai'i showed that for every \$1 Hawai'i invests in a quality four-year early learning program, the state will receive a return of \$4.20. This is not only about return of investment, but in providing for our employees and their children.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



PROTECTING HAWAII'S OHANA, CHILDREN, UNDER SERVED, ELDERLY AND DISABLED

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TO: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Representative Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair  
Members, Committee on Finance

FROM: Scott Morishige, MSW  
Executive Director, PHOCUSED

HEARING: **Thursday, February 26, 2015 at 11:00 a.m. in Conf. Rm. 308**

**Testimony in support of HB820 HD1, Relating to Public Early Childhood Education.**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **support** of HB820 HD1, which would establish the Executive Office on Early Learning Prekindergarten Program. PHOCUSED is a nonprofit membership and advocacy organization that works together with community stakeholders to impact program and policy change for the most vulnerable in our community, including low-income families with young children in the home.

Education can provide a leveling of socio-economic impacts experienced by children from low-income families. These families are dealing with the challenges of Hawaii's high cost of living realities and are focused on providing the necessities, like food and housing. As a result children from low-income families are less likely to have the "extra" resources necessary to access high quality early childhood education programs. As studies have clearly shown, investing in a high-quality early childhood education will result in higher levels of educational attainment and stronger social and economic well-being. A strong start with early education provides a bridge to a different future for these children.

An Early Learning Prekindergarten Program would provide children in low-income families with access to high-quality educational programming that would otherwise be out of reach. Without this access children from low-income families are less likely to have the strong start to their education that will result in providing a bridge to a successful college experience/career that will change their family's financial/social tree for generations to come.

Once again, PHOCUSED urges your support for this bill. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact PHOCUSED at 521-7462 or by e-mail at [admin@phocused-hawaii.org](mailto:admin@phocused-hawaii.org).



February 26, 2015

To: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Representative Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair  
Members of the House Committee on Finance

From: Deborah Zysman, Executive Director  
Good Beginnings Alliance

RE: **Support for HB 820 HD1: RELATING TO PUBLIC EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**  
Hearing: February 26, 2015 at 11 AM, Conference Room 308

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Good Beginnings Alliance (GBA) **supports HB 820, HD1**, which would establish the Executive Office on Early Learning Prekindergarten program. GBA has been a strong supporter of efforts to expand access to early learning opportunities for almost 20 years. This bill will provide the foundation on which to continue to build the early education services our kids need and deserve.

Last year, \$3 million was included in the supplemental budget to launch the Executive Office on Early Learning Prekindergarten program in 18 public elementary schools across the state. This authorizing legislation solidifies the program and allows for much needed expansion.

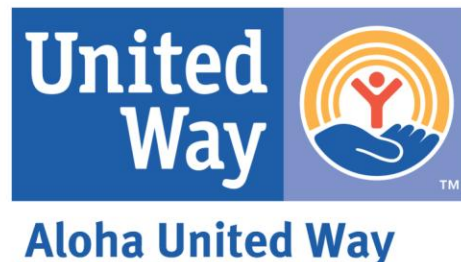
There is no debate that early learning opportunities have long lasting positive influence on children. We know, for example, that over 85 percent of a child's brain is developed by the age of five. Moreover, we know that almost 50 percent of Hawaii's four-year-olds receive little or no formal school readiness experience before entering kindergarten. Despite positive advances over the past two years, Hawaii still remains far behind other states in providing early childhood education. Ultimately, this means that our Department of Education (DOE) system must devote time and resources to bringing these children up to speed with their counterparts who have had some form of early learning experience. By investing in our children early, we help save our DOE time and money.

This bill would also ensure that Hawaii is able to compete for federal funds for early learning programs. Most importantly, this bill would support thousands of families across Hawaii, who desperately want to send their keiki to preschool, but simply can't afford it.

GBA strongly supports the passage of this measure.

## Aloha United Way

200 N. Vineyard Blvd., Suite 700  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817-3938  
Telephone (808) 536-1951  
Fax (808) 543-2222  
Website: [www.auw.org](http://www.auw.org)



## Cover Sheet

**Testifying Agency:** Aloha United Way  
Cindy Adams, President & CEO

### House Committee on Finance

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Representative Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair

**Thursday, February 26, 2015 at 11:00 A.M.**

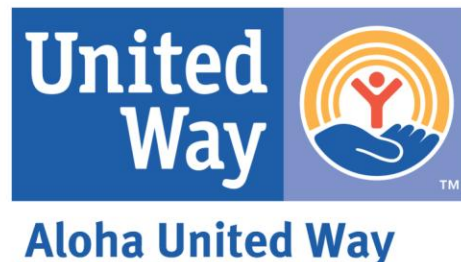
**Conference Room 308**

**HB 820, HD1: Relating to Public Early Childhood Education: Testimony in Support**



## Aloha United Way

200 N. Vineyard Blvd., Suite 700  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817-3938  
Telephone (808) 536-1951  
Fax (808) 543-2222  
Website: [www.auw.org](http://www.auw.org)



February 23, 2015

To: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair, Committee on Finance  
Representative Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice-Chair, Committee on Finance

Re: HB 820 HD 1 Relating to Public Early Childhood Education – **SUPPORT**  
Hearing: Thursday, February 26, 2015; Room 308; 11:00 AM

Honorable Chairs & Committee Members:

Aloha United Way supports HB 820 HD 1 which establishes an Executive Office on Early Learning Prekindergarten Program provided through the Department of Education and public charter schools.

HB 820 HD 1 is important because it lays the foundation for a universal preschool program which will enable all of Hawaii's keiki to have a solid preschool experience prior to starting kindergarten.

Studies have proven that high-quality early childhood education programs have both short-term and long-term benefits for children, individuals, and society as a whole. HB 820 HD 1 is the first step to provide parents with more access to these essential programs and also has the potential to alleviate financial burdens associated with early childhood education costs.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. We urge your favorable consideration of HB 820 HD 1.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Adams", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Cindy Adams  
President & Chief Executive Officer



841 Bishop St., Suite 301  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813



Telephone: 808 926-1530  
Contact@HEECoalition.org

House Committee on Finance  
Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Representative Scott Nishimoto, Vice Chair

February 26, 2015

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto and Committee Members:

This testimony is submitted in support for HB820 HD1, which establishes the Executive Office on Early Learning Prekindergarten Program to be administered by the Executive Office on Early Learning and provided through Department of Education public schools and public charter schools.

The Hui for Excellence in Education (HE'E) is a diverse coalition of over 40 parent and community organizations dedicated to improving student achievement by increasing family and community engagement and partnerships in our schools. Our member list is attached.

The Coalition has been a strong advocate for early learning since our inception in 2010. We have supported early learning legislation for the past few years, and have been particularly concerned about the late-born four year olds, who have not been able to attend public Kindergarten since the 2014-2015 year. Therefore, we support HB820 HD1, which establishes an early learning prekindergarten program to be administered by the Executive Office on Early Learning. We like that the program focuses on four-year olds with priority to underserved or at-risk children. We also like that the program incorporates high quality standards and developmentally appropriate practices, which includes attention to family engagement, the foundation of our Coalition. Further, we are encouraged that the bill incorporates points on the program implementation, specifically, supporting teacher professional development, coordination with other agencies to support children and data collection to monitor the progress of the program.

Finally, we recommend that the bill be amended to add language granting Geographic Exceptions for students attending schools with a Prekindergarten Program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Our support of this bill represents a 75% consensus or more of our membership.

Sincerely,

Cheri Nakamura  
HE'E Coalition Director

Academy 21  
After-School All-Stars Hawaii  
Alliance for Place Based Learning  
\*Castle Complex Community Council  
\*Castle-Kahuku Principal and CAS  
Center for Civic Education  
Coalition for Children with Special Needs  
\*Faith Action for Community Equity  
Fresh Leadership LLC  
Girl Scouts Hawaii  
\*Good Beginnings Alliance  
Harold K.L. Castle Foundation  
\*Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice  
Hawai'i Athletic League of Scholars  
\*Hawai'i Charter School Network  
\*Hawai'i Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition  
\*Hawaii State PTSA  
Hawai'i State Student Council  
Hawai'i State Teachers Association  
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Kanu Hawai'i  
\*Kaua'i Ho'okele Council  
Keiki to Career Kaua'i  
Kupu A'e  
\*Leaders for the Next Generation  
Learning First  
McREL's Pacific Center for Changing the Odds  
Our Public School  
\*Pacific Resources for Education and Learning  
\*Parents and Children Together

\*Parents for Public Schools Hawai'i  
Punahou School PUEO Program  
Teach for America  
The Learning Coalition  
US PACOM  
University of Hawai'i College of Education  
YMCA of Honolulu  
*Voting Members (\*) Voting member organizations vote on action items while individual and non-voting participants may collaborate on all efforts within the coalition.*



96 Pu'uhonu Place

Hilo, HI 96720

(808) 935-4304

(808) 969-7512

www.ahapunaleo.org

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Pūnana Leo o Mānoa

Pūnana Leo o Kaua'i

**Niulahiki**

*Hawaiian Language Online*

Rep. Sylvia Luke  
Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto  
Senate Committee on Finance

Date of Hearing: 2/26/2015  
Time: 11:00 a.m.  
Location: Conference Room 308

*Testimony of the 'Aha Pūnana Leo, Non-Profit Educational Organization*  
*Dedicated to the Revitalization of the Hawaiian Language*

**HB820, HD1 RELATING TO PUBLIC EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION:**  
**Support with Amendments**

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto and Members of the Committee on Finance:

My name is 'Ekekela Aiona, Executive Director of the 'Aha Pūnana Leo. The 'Aha Pūnana Leo **supports HB820, HD1 with amendments.**

In December of 2014, the State of Hawai'i was awarded a federal developmental grant through the United States Department of Education designed to improve early childhood education. Provisions in the grant included the development of Hawai'i early learning and development standards **appropriate for those children educated through the medium of Hawaiian** based on the Hawaiian language itself and its distinctive heritage.

In consideration of this federal provision, please amend HB820, HD1, SECTION 2.  
(3) (d) (4) to read:

(4) Alignment with the Hawaii early learning and development standards **appropriate for either of the State's two official languages**, which align with department of education standards, ~~including common core state standards~~, state content and performance standards **appropriate for either of the State's two official languages**, and general learner outcomes for grades kindergarten to twelve, to facilitate a seamless and high-quality educational experience for children.

The 'Aha Pūnana Leo stands behind this amendment as it brings HB820, HD1 into compliance with federal provisions of the United States Department of Education. Please amend.

Mahalo nui,  
M. 'Ekekela Aiona  
Executive Director, 'Aha Pūnana Leo  
96 Pu'uhonu Place  
Hilo, HI 96720  
(808) 935-4304

February 26, 2015

To: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair of the House Committee on Finance,  
and Members of the House Committee on Finance

From: GG Weisenfeld  
Wimmie Wong Lui

RE: HB 820, HD1 Relating to Public Early Childhood Education

Chair Luke and members of the House Committee on Finance:

I, along with Wimmie Wong Lui, am presenting written testimony regarding HB 820, HD1 Relating to Public Early Childhood Education whose purpose is to establish the Executive Office on Early Learning Prekindergarten Program to be administered by the Executive Office on Early Learning and provided through the Department of Education public schools and public charter schools.

We are both private citizens who are interested in advancing early learning in our state.

We are pleased with the EOEL Prekindergarten program that began serving children during the 2014-15 school year. The teachers have been able to implement high-quality standards, including using individual child assessments, engaging families, and aligning their curriculum with the Hawaii Early Learning and Development Standards, all of which are linked to positive child outcomes.

We believe that the Executive Office on Early Learning should administer the program as the services are provided through the Department of Education public schools and charter schools. **We therefore support the public early childhood education program described in HB 820, HD1.** In addition, we do not have any objections to the amendments made to the original bill. We urge the committee to pass this bill moving it forward for further consideration.

Thank you for considering our thoughts and concerns.

GG Weisenfeld  
193 Pauahilani Place  
Kailua HI 96734

Wimmie Wong Lui  
724 Prospect Street  
Honolulu HI 96813





TO: Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Honorable Scott Nishimoto, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Finance

DATE: Thursday, February 26, 2015  
PLACE: Conference Room 308  
Hawai'i State Capitol

FROM: Kamehameha Schools

**LATE**

**RE: HOUSE BILL 820 HD1, RELATING TO PUBLIC EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on HB 820 HD1. Kamehameha Schools offers comments in **support** of this bill which would establish the Executive Office on Early Learning Prekindergarten Program to be administered by the Executive Office on Early Learning and provided through Department of Education public schools and public charter schools. We have been committed to advancing early learning across the state and have served in a leadership role with the state's Early Learning Advisory Board which unequivocally supports early learning.

Bernice Pauahi Bishop, whose mission is to improve the capability and well-being of Native Hawaiian children through education. We serve K-12 students through campus programs on O'ahu, Hawai'i and Maui, and three- and four-year-olds at preschool sites statewide. In 2004, the Early Childhood Education division also began serving keiki from birth to three years old, as part of its Hi'ilani Early Childhood Collaborative program. We also provide scholarships to keiki attending other preschools and provide funding for child-family interaction programs that have filled a great need in rural communities.

Since its inception more than 20 years ago, the Kamehameha Schools Early Childhood Education Division has provided more than 11,000 keiki with their first preschool experience. Early childhood education and parental support is the cornerstone of the Education Strategic Plan adopted in 2005, which seeks to foster long-term intergenerational change in the way Native Hawaiian families approach learning. Research demonstrates that early education is a key factor in lifelong success for all children, and we strongly urge the legislature to promote, enhance and support the efforts of the State of Hawai'i to appropriately address the needs of Hawaii's pre-kindergarten children.



**LATE**

Testimony To  
The House Committee on Finance

Thursday, February 26, 2015  
11:00 am  
Room 308

Re: HB 820 HD1 – Related to Early Childhood Education

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto and Members of the Committee:

My name is Robert G. Peters and I am a recently retired Head of an independent school in Honolulu which has a pre-K program. Over the past 10 years, I have served as a Chair of the Early Learning Task Force, the Early Learning Council and currently as Chair of the Early Learning Advisory Board (ELAB). Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony on behalf of the ELAB in support of HB 820 HD1, A Bill for an Act Relating to Early Childhood Education which establishes the Executive Office on Early Learning Prekindergarten Program and funding associated with the Program.

The bill seeks to establish the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) prekindergarten program to be administered by the EOEL and provided through public schools, including charter schools. Both my own experience as a member of the early learning community and the abundance of research on school success confirm the value of high quality early childhood education for all children. Benefits are noted in school readiness, general school success and long-term quality of life and contributions as community members. In addition, dollars invested in early education pay dividends for communities as a whole by reducing costs for remediation in schools, reduction in crime and welfare expenses along with reduced homelessness and substance abuse. A study in Hawaii completed in 2008 by Good Beginnings Alliance determined that for every dollar invested in early learning a four dollar plus return could be expected.

This bill provides for a prekindergarten program built around widely accepted standards of high quality which are research-based, developmentally appropriate and identified with better outcomes for children. Quality early learning experiences for our underserved and at-risk children can help to lower the achievement gap by improving school readiness. We hope that moving the bill forward with a minimum of at least level funding will be another step toward building broader access opportunities for all children in Hawaii regardless of family income or circumstance. But first, we recognize the primacy of meeting the needs of underserved *keiki*.

We urge the committee to consider the bill favorably.

Robert G. Peters, EdD  
Chair, Early Learning Advisory Board

**LATE**



*46-063 Emepela Pl. #U101 Kaneohe, HI 96744 · (808) 679-7454 · Kris Coffield · Co-founder/Executive Director*

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**TESTIMONY FOR HOUSE BILL 820, HOUSE DRAFT 1, RELATING TO PUBLIC  
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

**House Committee on Finance  
Hon. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Hon. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair**

**Thursday, February 26, 2015, 11:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308**

Honorable Chair Luke and committee members:

I am Kris Coffield, representing IMUAlliance, a nonpartisan political advocacy organization that currently boasts over 300 local members. On behalf of our members, we offer this testimony in support of HB 820, HD 1, relating to public early childhood education.

As noted by an MIT working group on the topic, investments in early childhood education pay dividends for the formal preparation of children as learners and future citizens, while also benefiting taxpayers and boosting economic vitality. Research on the benefits of quality pre-kindergarten programs indicates that for every dollar invested in such opportunities, society saves four to eight dollars on remedial classes, special education, welfare programs, and criminal justice costs. Roughly 85 percent of a child's brain develops from birth to age five, according to modern neuroscience, emphasizing the importance of providing a quality learning environment during these formative years. Preschool brings an approximately \$4.20 return on investment for every dollar spent on quality early childhood services, especially in terms of longterm life skills. At the national level, every dollar spent on early childhood education saves taxpayers up to \$13.00 in future costs, including lowered healthcare costs, reduced rates of educational remediation and prison incarceration, and higher productivity. Access to quality pre-kindergarten programs not only helps working parents fulfill their responsibilities, but is essential for building a 21<sup>st</sup> century labor force.

Early childhood education is especially important for at-risk students. According to the High Scopes/Perry Preschool longitudinal study, at-risk children with access to quality early learning programs were 20 percent more likely to graduate from high school, 14 percent more likely to be employed, and 24 percent less likely to have been incarcerated by age 40 than peers without such access. As the Department of education continues to streamline educational accountability, particularly through the possible institution of merit pay and high-stakes

evaluations for teachers and educational officers, it is imperative that we do all we can to ensure our children are “classroom ready,” meaning that they are prepared to receive basic instruction and effectively socialize with peers upon entering elementary school, placing both our keiki and their teachers on the path to success.

Utilizing public school resources for the provision of early learning will place our children's futures in the hands of the state's most qualified education professionals, namely our certificated and licensed public school teachers. Additionally, public early learning programs will not set a nefarious precedent for the future adoption of school voucher programs at the elementary and secondary school level. Finally, this proposal does not violate the U.S. Constitution's and Hawaii State Constitution's Establishment Clauses, which bar preferential governmental treatment for religious institutions, ensuring that the state will not become ensnared in costly litigation because of a misappropriation of funds to a program that promotes a specific religious viewpoint. Public early learning will, instead, include research-based, developmentally appropriate, secular practices that are associated with better educational outcomes for children.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Sincerely,  
Kris Coffield  
*Executive Director*  
IMUAlliance